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b<>com inaugurates its new campus: 6,000 m² dedicated to digital innovation

400 guests are expected to celebrate the new campus of the Institute of Research and Technology (IRT) in Rennes, designed to accommodate more than 200 people. Since the start of the project, 85 jobs have been created, including engineers, researchers, PhD students, designers, and ergonomists. This campus will ultimately host 300 employees.

Vincent Marcatté, President, was delighted to finally be able to open the doors of b<>com: *"This campus is a beautiful representation of the b<>com brand. Its values are found here, with a focus on collaboration, creativity, and the ability to conduct research with a strong market vision. It's also a strong symbol of the innovation and dynamism of the regional ecosystem."*

A campus designed as a work tool for researchers and innovation

The creation of this campus is part of a vision: bringing talents from multiple fields together in one location, and questioning how to organize a workplace: can the layout of spaces stimulate innovation? The building must serve b<>com's mission: developing and marketing innovative tools, products, and services.

Because creativity and interaction are key to innovation, the b<>com campus is the result of deep thinking about spaces. It is meant to be a place to feel comfortable and feed our curiosity. Several examples of choices intended to encourage exchanges: in open spaces, a single team is intentionally distributed so that 5G network experts are right next to medical imaging researchers, ergonomists who specialize in software developer interfaces, etc. And to think better together, creativity spaces allow for thought and discussion, while quiet spaces invite concentration. On each floor, there are formal or informal interaction and "elbow-rubbing" areas.



A creativity room. Credit b<>com

Designed so that researchers can experiment and test, some technology platforms have already been deployed; others are still being defined. Among other things, an auditorium that can play future spatialized audio and image formats for a never-before-seen experience, and an initial infrastructure to prepare for 5G networks, will be used for work centered on immersion, virtual reality, spatialized audio, and Ultra High Definition. A data center has been in service since the start of the year, supporting projects' XXL storage and intensive computing needs but designed to accommodate outside requests.

Showcase on French and Rennes know-how around the world

The campus, which is open to clients and partners, embodies regional and national expertise in the field of digital technologies. Located in the heart of the new Via Silva economic area in Cesson-Sévigné (a neighborhood dedicated to innovation that is already home to Technicolor, Thomson Video Networks, OVH, Cap Gemini, Secure IC, Dassault Systems, Syrlinks, etc.), the building houses a 130 m² showroom. Beginning in autumn, it will offer a course on the transformations of digital society.

Today, visitors there can learn about the first two products being sold by the IRT. b<>com ***Ultra Player*** is a tool intended for professionals who want to handle the latest generation of uncompressed audio/video content. The software b<>com ***Ultra Marker*** allows the digital watermarking of Ultra High Definition files.

Architecture at the core of the project

The campus is a functional work tool in which architecture plays a key role. Inside, raw materials - concrete and metal - recall the "factory" spirit, echoing the work of the digital craftspeople on the research teams. Outside, the use of mirrored façades and bay windows make this building unmissable.



The all-glass-and-mirrors façade. Credit Fred Pieau

*"Our work is expressed by a single concept of façades, which are characterized by a functional system of solar protection and perceptions that change with perspective, and by seasonal variations. What better subject than this world-class research Institute to express this visual work! I am very satisfied with having taken part in the b<>com concept and its new way of envisioning work, a new art of living for all of its users", said **Jean-Pierre Meignan, the project's architect.***

An unprecedented program for the inauguration

For this occasion, partnerships were forged within the Rennes community:

An exhibit is being offered by Fred Pieau, a photographer who followed around the b<>com construction site. "Bouillants", the digital art festival, is presenting an installation that uses a virtual reality tools to help discover the realities of others. Finally, the company "Spectaculaires", which specializes in architectural illumination, is unveiling another side of the building at nightfall.

The campus in figures

- 200 employees
- 350 screens
- 3000 m³ of concrete
- 128 tons of steel
- 2,000 optical fibers (10 per person)
- 350 m² of conference and meeting rooms

About b<>com

The b<>com Institute of Research & Technology is dedicated to boost development and marketing of tools, products and services that improve everyday's life, thanks to research and innovation in digital technologies. In concrete terms, b<>com is innovating at the highest level in the areas of hypermedia (ultra high definition images, 3D, intelligent content, virtual and augmented reality, etc.), smarter and faster networks and e-health as the first area of application.

It is based in Rennes and was launched at the end of 2012. It is supported by French government, Brittany Region and Cities Councils (Rennes, Lannion and Brest).

www.b-com.com



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